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METAPHYSICAL DISSERTATION BEARING ON NEW TESTAMENT CRITICISM, . 1

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CRITICAL DISSERTATION ON διαθήκη WITH ITS LOGICAL SEQUENCE, . . . 15

I.—Metaphysical Dissertation

BEARING ON

New Testament Criticism.

JULY 1889.

Re-written from a PLEA FOR A NEW ENGLISH VERSION OF THE SCRIPTURES, 1864.

Spirit πνεῦμα רוח

THROUGHOUT the New Testament the noun πνεῦμα (from πνεῖν to blow or breathe) occurs above 380 times, and is used with much variety of scope and meaning. Yet as its Latin and English representative, *spiritus*, *spirit*, has similar latitude of signification, *spirit* may, in most instances, adequately represent πνεῦμα. It is highly important to distinguish πνεῦμα from ψυχή *soul*, and ζωή *life*. *Life* is that active principle of which the opposite is death. 'All life, according to Scripture,' says Delitzsch in his *Biblical Psychology*, 'is activity and operation of the spirit.' With God is the fountain of life: his only-begotten Son is The Life; and life comes, in the Scriptural usage of the word, to denote the highest blessedness. 'In the way of righteousness is life.' 'He that findeth me,' says Wisdom, 'findeth life.' 'To be spiritually minded is life and peace.' It is with

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similar import that the word *life* is used in these well-known and richly significant phrases, Prince of Life, Bread of Life, Water of Life, Tree of Life, Book of Life, Crown of Life. The *soul* is said, by Delitzsch, to be 'the product or manifestation of the *spirit*,' and to 'include the intellectual nature, the desires and affections, that part of man which, so to speak, is turned towards the flesh and the world.' Hence the ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος or *natural man* is man unsanctified by divine grace, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, they being foolishness to him; 'neither' says the Apostle Paul, 'can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned' (1 Corinthians 2. 14).

The *spirit* is, as it were, the mainspring of the *soul*, animating, ruling, guiding it: it is one's personality, one's very self, acting through the soul upon the body, and giving to one's actions their character and their energy. Hence it has been observed that while, in the Scriptures, it is common for a man to address his *soul*, there is no instance of a man addressing his *spirit*. The spirit is (so to speak) the mover and regulator, and the giver of the address to the soul. The spirit within the man is that which knoweth the things of the man. An ungodly man is unrenewed in the spirit of his mind. The spirit by which he is influenced is the spirit of the world. Hence the things of the world and of the flesh are the objects of his chief attention, leading him to speak in this fashion to his soul, 'Soul, thou hast many goods laid up for many years: take thine ease; eat; drink; be merry.' But when the spirit is

renewed in accordance with Ezekiel 36. 26, 'A new heart will I give you; and a new spirit will I put within you,' then the soul receives new principles of action, and thus moves and works in a direction the opposite of that in which it formerly acted, the language of the renewed spirit being of this kind, 'Bless the LORD, O my soul.' 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.' Accordingly the *soul* of the Virgin Mary magnified the Lord when her *spirit* rejoiced in God her Saviour. The *soul* renewed and sanctified through the renewal and sanctification of the *spirit* uses the members of the body in the service of their Creator, and thus the Apostle Paul prays for the Thessalonian brethren that their whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The true Christian is a spiritual man (πνευματικός). No longer carnally minded, he is spiritually minded: his circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit: he serves in newness of spirit, and exemplifies the first of the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.'

The New Testament discloses a most intimate connection between the Holy Spirit and the renewed spirit of the Christian. 'The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God' (Romans 8. 16). 'They were all filled with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2. 4). 'Ye are God's temple; and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.' 'Your body is the Temple of

the Holy Spirit in you' (1 Corinthians 3. 16; 6. 19). 'If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit' (Galatians 5. 25). Similarly, Ezekiel 36. 26-27, Mark 1. 8, Luke 1. 15, 41, 67, Acts 4. 8, 31, Romans 8. 9, 11, and 1 John 3. 24; 4. 13.

In the Authorised Version of the New Testament uniformity of translation is appropriately adhered to in dealing with the word *πνεῦμα* in a large majority of the passages containing it, the English equivalent *spirit* being used. In one passage, however, namely, Revelation 13. 15, *πνεῦμα* is translated *life*. 'He had power to give life unto the image of the beast.' In the Revised Version of 1881 *breath* is preferable; but there seems to be no sufficient reason for not adhering to the usual rendering *spirit*—the giving of *spirit* to an image being as good English as the *giving* of *life* (Isaiah 42. 5).

In Matthew 27. 50 and John 19. 30, the words, *yielded up the ghost*, and *gave up the ghost*, come far short of expressing the deep meaning of the original, *ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα*, and *παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα*. These Greek phrases imply, not merely that Jesus *expired*, like *ἐξέπνευσε(ν)* in Mark 15. 37 and Luke 23. 46, but that he voluntarily surrendered his *spirit* into the hands of his heavenly Father, according to his own words in John 10. 17, 'I lay down my soul, that I may take it again.' In the Revised Version the substitution of *his spirit* for *the ghost* is a decided advantage, as bringing out the force of the original:

Matthew 27. 50	yielded up his spirit.
John 19. 30	gave up his spirit.

The fact here stated is thus seen to be the counterpart of the Saviour's expiring words as given in Luke 23. 46, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.'

In connection with this point, it is to be regretted that the suggestion of the American Revision Committee to substitute *Spirit* for *Ghost* universally in the phrase *the Holy Ghost* was not accepted. *Ghost* would be obviously unsuitable in most passages where πνεῦμα occurs. In Psalm 51. 11, Isaiah 63. 10, 11, Luke 11. 13, Eph. 1. 13; 4. 30, 1 Thess. 4. 8, where the context contains, besides the epithet *Holy*, some other defining or qualifying word, *Holy Spirit* is preferred to *Holy Ghost*: thy Holy Spirit, his Holy Spirit, that Holy Spirit of promise, the Holy Spirit of God. In *one* passage (Luke 11. 13) the expression *the Holy Spirit* is used absolutely, 'How much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' Why should not the same expression have been used in the more than ninety passages of the New Testament where the phrase *Holy Ghost* occurs? Apart from the simple unsuitableness of the word *Ghost*, there is in several of these passages this further disadvantage that the occurrence of *Ghost* in close proximity to *Spirit*, where the self-same Holy Spirit is designated by both words, obscures this identity, and thus mars the force of the passages:

Luke 2. 26-27.—And it was revealed unto him by the Holy **Ghost**, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the **Spirit** into the temple.

Luke 4. 1.—And Jesus, being full of the Holy **Ghost**, returned from [the] Jordan, and was led by the **Spirit** into the wilderness.

John 1. 33.—Upon whom thou shalt see the **Spirit** descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy **Ghost**.

7. 39.—But this spake he of the **Spirit**, . . . for the Holy **Ghost** was not yet given.

Acts 2. 4.—And they were all filled with the Holy **Ghost**, and began to speak with other tongues, as the **Spirit** gave them utterance.

Similarly John 14. 16-26, Acts 5. 3-9; 16. 6-7, 1 Cor. 2. 10-14; 12. 3-4, and 1 Peter 1. 11-12.

In the Revised Version, *Ghost* is retained in three of these eleven passages, namely, Acts 5. 3; 16. 6; 1 Peter 1. 12; whereas in the other passages it appropriately gives place to *Spirit*. Nowhere in the Old Testament is רוח translated *ghost*.

In only one passage of the Authorised Version, namely, John 3. 8, is πνεῦμα translated *wind*; and *wind* is retained in the Revised Version. Yet in none of the 380 other passages does πνεῦμα countenance this exceptional rendering. What in Hebrew is expressed by the one word רוח is expressed in Greek, Latin, and English, by two words, namely, πνεῦμα and ἄνεμος, *spiritus* and *ventus*, *spirit* and *wind*, respectively. And there seems to be no reason why Jesus should not have

used ὁ ἄνεμος rather than τὸ πνεῦμα in John 3. 8, had he meant *the wind.* This appears still further obvious from the fact that the phrase τὸ πνεῦμα occurs again in the end of the same sentence, as well as previously in verses 5, 6, with apparently one and the same reference, and in these three instances clearly denotes *The Spirit.* Hence, even if in some other passages πνεῦμα should apparently mean *wind,* such could not prove that τὸ πνεῦμα in the beginning can have a meaning different from its meaning in the end of John 3. 8, especially as identity of meaning appears essential to the force of the argument: As is τὸ πνεῦμα, so is every one who is born or begotten ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος.

The arguments for proving that the first τὸ πνεῦμα here designates *the wind* seem far from conclusive. Alford writes:

"Bengel, after Origen and Augustine, takes τὸ πνεῦμα of the *Holy Spirit* exclusively: but this can hardly be. The *form* of the sentence, as well as its import, is against it. The πνεῖ, ἀκούεις, οἶδας, are all said of well-known facts. And the comparison would not hold on that supposition. "As *the Spirit* is in His working on those born of Him, so is *every one that is born of the Spirit.*" But on the other interpretation, we have **The wind breatheth**, etc. :—**so is**, i.e. "*so it is with*" (see a similar construction, Matt. xiii. 45) **every one born of the Spirit.**—Notice it is not ὁ ἄνεμος here, but τὸ πνεῦμα, the gentle breath of the wind;—and it is heard, not felt;—a case in which the οὐκ οἶδας κ.τ.λ. is more applicable than in that of a violent wind steadily blowing. It is one of those sudden breezes springing up on a calm day, which has no apparent direction, but we hear it rustling in the leaves around."

This imaginary and weakly argued description is unsupported by proof. In not one of the 380 other passages does πνεῦμα bear this meaning;

and there is certainly nothing to indicate that *here* it denotes a gentle breeze of wind, or that ἄνεμος would be inapplicable to such a breeze. It does not appear that ἄνεμος in itself implies violence. In Mark 4. 37, John 6. 18, Revelation 6. 13, where ἄνεμος does refer to a violent wind, the violence is expressed not by ἄνεμος but by the qualifying word μέγας: whereas on the other hand, in Mark 9. 20, Luke 9. 39, Acts 8. 7, where violence *is* indicated, πνεῦμα occurs with no such qualification. Hence it may surely be inferred that in the Greek of the New Testament, πνεῦμα does not necessarily imply gentleness, nor ἄνεμος violence, and that had *wind* been intended in the beginning of John 3. 8, ἄνεμος rather than πνεῦμα would have been the word employed; similarly as is the case in the Septuagint version of the eleventh of Ecclesiastes, where רוח is represented by ἄνεμος in the fourth verse, and by πνεῦμα in the fifth, a distinction which the Vulgate and the English version of 1611 correctly reproduce.

Wind as the translation of πνεῦμα may possibly here have had its origin in a confounding of the πνεῦμα with the φωνή, and treating the two as if they were identical, as Alford does where, as already quoted, he says of the πνεῦμα, 'it is heard, not felt.' Yet the πνεῦμα and the voice of the πνεῦμα are quite distinct from each other; and it is not the πνεῦμα but the *voice*, that one is said to hear. Now, though τὸ πνεῦμα is not synonymous with ὁ ἄνεμος, yet the wind may quite well be included in the expression, τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκούεις: for as

the roar of thunder and the loud-sounding noise of the ocean may be called the voice of the Almighty (Psalm 29), so likewise the wind may be described as the voice of the Spirit, brooding over the face of the waters (Genesis 1. 2), and breathing in the gentle breeze, and in the stormy hurricane.

It may be further observed that the phrase *ὅπου θέλει* precludes *τὸ πνεῦμα* from denoting *the wind*. The verb *θέλειν* occurs above two hundred times in the New Testament, and except very rarely, as in Acts 2. 12, where its import resembles that of the English auxiliary verb *will*, it expresses a mental act of desire, volition, or determination, proceeding from an agent capable of wishing, willing, and determining. Hence *ὅπου θέλει* in John 3. 8 may be illustrated by the nearly synonymous expression *καθὼς βούλεται* in 1 Corinthians 12. 11, *τὸ πνεῦμα* being the subject of each verb.

Still further, apart from the modern researches and discoveries of meteorology, the language of Holy Scripture refutes the idea that the statement 'Thou knowest not whence *ἔρχεται* and whither *ὑπάγει*' can refer to the wind. So far from the movements and directions of the wind being unknown, the Scriptures represent them as well known and easily traced: Job 1. 19, Psalm 18. 10, Ecclesiastes 1. 6, Ezekiel 37. 9, Luke 8. 23. But it is very different with the movements of the Spirit; John 3. 8 being illustrated by Ecclesiastes 11. 5, 'Thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit'—*ἡ ὁδὸς τοῦ πνεύματος* as in the Septuagint; which, however, has *τηρῶν ἄνεμον* in verse 4,

the one verse being argumentatively quite distinct from the other. Dean Plumptre, who prefers *spirit* to *wind* in both Ecclesiastes 11. 5 and John 3. 8, says, in his Commentary on Ecclesiastes (11. 5),

> "The growth of the human embryo was for the early observers of nature an impenetrable mystery. It became yet more mysterious when men thought of life, with all its phenomena of sensation and consciousness entering into the material structure thus "fearfully and wonderfully made." This sense of the word agrees, it will be seen, with its use in chapters 3. 21, 12. 7 . . . The sentence [11. 5] should run thus, describing not two distinct phenomena but one complex fact, "as thou knowest not the way of the spirit (the breath of life) how the framework of the body (literally the bones . . .) is in the womb of her that is with child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all."'

In John 3. 8, Wiclif, following the Vulgate, 'Spiritus ubi vult spirat,' gives, 'The Spirit brethith where he wole'; and the Rhemish Version likewise is here preferable both to the version of 1611 and to the Revised Version of 1881: 'The Spirit breatheth where he will; and thou hearest his voice, but thou knowest not whence he cometh or whither he goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.'

The essential lesson of the verse may be thus briefly stated, *As* is the Spirit in his mysterious movements, *so* is every one who is begotten by the Spirit. Yet the substitution of *wind* for *Spirit* in the beginning of the verse breaks the connection between τὸ πνεῦμα and τοῦ πνεύματος, thus destroying the point and pith of the Saviour's words to Nicodemus, and obliterating the expressiveness of the figure by which he describes the regeneration of His people.

Further, the translating of πνεῦμα *spirit* in the beginning as well as in the end of the verse, preserves all that is contained in the verse as it stands in the versions of 1611 and 1881, and is at the same time far more richly expressive. It does not exclude the reference to the wind, but includes it in its fullest extent, while it at the same time directs the reader beyond the wind to Him whose voice the wind is, and who 'bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.' Men hear the wind, and ascertain its course, and see its consequences; but He who gives forth His voice in the wind continues enshrined in unsearchable glory. His way is in the sea: His path is in many waters: His footsteps are unknown. Men, therefore, know not 'whence he cometh, or whither he goeth.' 'Lo he goeth by me,' says Job (9. 11), 'but I see not; and he passeth on, but I perceive him not.'

Soul ψυχή נפש

It is essential to accuracy that ψυχή *soul* should be pointedly distinguished, not only from πνεῦμα *spirit*, which it invariably is throughout the Authorised Version, but also from ζωή *life*. Yet, while ψυχή is correctly translated *soul* above fifty times, there are about forty instances in which it is translated *life*, to the obscuring of the important psychological distinction between *life* and *soul*, as illustrated by such passages as Psalm 66. 9, 'Who holdeth our **soul** נפש in **life** חיים.'

In Matthew 16. 25-26, Mark 8. 35-37, Luke 12. 19-23, ψυχή is translated both *soul* and *life*, the reasoning and the force of the argument being (as in John 3. 8) destroyed thereby:

> Matt. 16. 25-26.—Whosoever will save his **life** shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his **life** for my sake shall find it: for what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own **soul**?
>
> Luke 12. 19-23.—**Soul**, . . . take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. . . . Fool! this night thy **soul** shall be required of thee. . . . Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your **life**, what ye shall eat, neither for the body what ye shall put on: the **life** is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment.

This misleading diversity is left unaltered in the Revised Version of Luke 12. 19-23, where also the important relation of *soul* to *body* is thus obliterated. In the two other passages the translating of ψυχή diversely *life* and *soul* is indeed obviated. Yet the selection of *life* rather than *soul* to represent ψυχή weakens the force of the Saviour's words about losing one's soul, and, besides obliterating the important connection between this and other passages where *soul* occurs, extends the false uniformity between this passage and a

multitude of others in which *life* correctly represents, not ψυχή, but ζωή.

In Matthew 16. 26 and Mark 8. 36, *forfeit his life* is surely a poor substitute for *lose his soul*; and it is less true to the original.

The substitution of *life* for *soul* in certain passages referring to Christ, besides not being required by the English idiom, fails to do justice to the human aspect of His mediatorial nature on the one hand and to those divine attributes of His which are included in the deeply expressive term ζωή *life* on the other, as where He is called The Life, the Bread of Life, the Prince of Life. By an anthropomorphism the Hebrew נפש *soul* is sometimes used even of God, as in Jeremiah 9. 8 (9), and Amos 6. 8. Yet when the corresponding Greek ψυχή is used of the divine Redeemer, it involves such an essential reference to His humanity as requires it to be carefully distinguished from ζωή חיים, which it cannot be if translated *life*. This inaccurate translation also obscures the important connection between some passages and others in their common reference to the sufferings and death of the Messiah, or in their relation to one another in this particular—thus,

Exodus 30. 12.—Then shall they give every man a ransom for his **soul** unto the LORD.

Mark 10. 45.—The Son of Man came . . . to give his **life** a ransom for many.

Psalms 35. 4, 40. 14.— . . . that seek after my **soul.**
Psalm 38. 12.— . . . that seek after my **life.**

Isaiah 53. 11.—He shall see of the travail of his **soul,** *and* shall be satisfied.
12.—He hath poured out his **soul** unto death.
Matthew 26. 38.—My **soul** is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.
John 12. 27.—Now is my **soul** troubled.

John 10. 11.—I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his **life** for the sheep.
17.—I lay down my **life** that I might take it again.
1 John 3. 16.—He laid down his **life** for us.

How much more clearly would an English reader perceive and appreciate the psychology of the Scriptures if the distinction between ζωή חיים *life* and ψυχή נפש *soul* were represented with uniform accuracy throughout the English Version!

'Jehovah Elohim formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of **life**; and man became a living **soul.**' Genesis 2. 7.

'So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living **soul**: the last Adam *became* a **life**-giving **spirit.**' 1 Corinthians 15. 45.

II.—*Critical Dissertation on* διαθήκη *with its Logical Sequence.*

Covenant διαθήκη ברית

THE noun διαθήκη, which occurs thirty-three times in the New Testament, is translated *covenant* twenty, and *testament* thirteen times.

Covenant—

Luke 1. 72—to remember his holy covenant.
Acts 3. 25—the covenant which God made with our fathers.
Acts 7. 8—the covenant of circumcision.
Romans 9. 4—the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law.
Romans 11. 27—this *is* my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.
Ephesians 2. 12—strangers from the covenants of promise.
Hebrews 12. 24—Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.
Hebrews 13. 20—the blood of the everlasting covenant.

Gal. 3. 15, 17 4. 24	Heb. 8. 6, 8, 9 twice, 10 9. 4 twice	10. 16, 29.

Testament—

Matthew 26. 28
Mark 14. 24. } my blood of the new testament.

Luke 22. 20 } the new testament in my blood.
1 Cor. 11. 25 }
2 Cor. 3. 6—ministers of the new testament.
„ 14—the reading of the old testament.
Hebrews 7. 22 ; 9. 15 twice, 16, 17, 20.
Revelation 11. 19—the ark of his testament.

An attentive examination of these passages and of the biblical use of διαθήκη may show that this variation is unnecessary and inaccurate, and that it obscures the scope and import of the original, and the relation of some passages containing διαθήκη to others. The arbitrariness of the variation appears on comparing, for instance, Hebrews 9. 4 and Revelation 11. 19 with each other. As the meaning of διαθήκη in both passages is obviously the same, διαθήκη ought to be translated the same in both. Yet they stand diversely thus,

Hebrews 9. 4—the ark of the **covenant.**
Revelation 11. 19—the ark of his **testament.**

There is a similarly arbitrary variation in dealing with the phrase τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης :

Hebrews 9. 20—the blood of the **testament.**
„ 10. 29—the blood of the **covenant.**

So likewise the κρείττονος διαθήκης of Hebrews 7. 22 is clearly identical with the κρείττονός διαθήκης of 8. 6. Is it possible then to assign any reason why these Greek words should be diversely translated *better testament* in the first passage, and *better covenant* in the second ?

Moreover, although the διαθήκη mentioned in Hebrews 9. 15, 20 is the same διαθήκη which is

mentioned in verse 4, yet this διαθήκη, correctly called a *covenant* in verse fourth, is called a *testament* in verses fifteenth and twentieth:

4 the ark of the **covenant** . . . the tables of the **covenant.**	15 the first **testament.** 20 the blood of the **testament.**

In several passages, διαθήκη refers to the ברית or *covenant* which God established between himself and ancient Israel (Hebrews 8. 9), and which could not have been a *testament* in the testamentary sense of the term. In 2 Corinthians 3. 14 the Apostle Paul describes this covenant as τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης, *the old covenant*; and in verse 6 he speaks of another covenant, which he calls καινῆς διαθήκης, a *new covenant.* Yet, in 2 Corinthians 3. 14, Hebrews 9. 15, 18, 20, Revelation 11. 19, the Authorised Version calls this ancient διαθήκη a *testament*; whereas in Hebrews 8. 9; 9. 4, the same διαθήκη is correctly designated *covenant.* The new covenant also is rightly called a *covenant* in Hebrews 8. 6, 8, 10; 10. 16, 29; 12. 24; 13. 20; whereas in Matthew 26. 28, Mark 14. 24, Luke 22. 20, 1 Corinthians 11. 25, 2 Corinthians 3. 6, Hebrews 7. 22; 9. 15, it is called a *testament.*

It is indeed commonly admitted that in the New Testament διαθήκη means *covenant* almost universally. Yet Hebrews 9. 16-17 is said to be a clear and indubitable exception, and is adduced as a passage in which διαθήκη *must* mean *testament* in the ordinary testamentary sense of the word.

Accordingly, whereas in the Revised Version of 1881, *covenant* has been appropriately substituted for *testament* in eleven out of the thirteen instances, *testament* is retained in Hebrews 9. 16, 17. And even while the American Revision Committee demur to the insertion of *testament* as an alternative rendering in the margin of Galatians 3. 15, 17, Hebrews 7. 23; 8. 6, 8, 9, 10; 10. 16; 12. 24, they except from their disapproval Hebrews 9. 15-17, the following note being the Tenth in the list of readings and renderings preferred by the American Committee, and recorded by their desire at the end of the Revised Version of the New Testament: Let the word "testament" be everywhere changed to "covenant" (without an alternate in the margin), except in Hebrews ix. 15-17.[v] The following are the two English Versions of Hebrews 9. 15-20:

Version of 1611.

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new **testament**, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first **testament**, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

16 For where a **testament** *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

17 For a **testament** *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

18 Whereupon neither the

Version of 1881.

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of a new **covenant**, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first **covenant**, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal in-
16 heritance. For where a **testament** is, there must of necessity be the death of him that
17 made it. For a **testament** is of force where there hath been death: for doth it ever avail while he that made it
18 liveth? Wherefore even the

Version of 1611.

first *testament* was dedicated without blood.

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

20 Saying, This *is* the blood of the **testament** which God hath enjoined unto you.

Version of 1881.

first *covenant* hath not been dedicated without blood.

19 For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses unto all the people according to the law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself,

20 and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the **covenant** which God commanded to you-ward.

It is surely apparent that in the words here quoted from Exodus 24. 8, Moses meant not a *testament* which had become effectual through the *death* of the *testator*, but the *covenant* הברית established by God between himself and Israel, as mentioned in Exodus 19. 5; 34. 27, Deuteronomy 5. 2, Hebrews 8. 9. The only death in *this* case was the death of the sacrificial victims, namely the oxen of the burnt-offerings and peace-offerings mentioned in Exodus 24. 5, or, as detailed in Hebrews 9. 19, the calves and the goats. In no sense of the word could these be called a *testator*. And even as to the καινὴ διαθήκη, the *new covenant*, it must be noted that its author was the author of the old covenant, namely Jehovah, the God of Israel (Jeremiah 31. 31-34, Hebrews 8. 8-10), Jesus being, not the author, but the mediator of the new covenant (Hebrews 8. 6; 9. 15; 12. 24), similarly as Moses was mediator of the old covenant (Galatians 3. 19).

Now the fact that God is the author of the διαθήκη, in the sense in which a testator is the author of his own testament, precludes the idea of the διαθήκη being made effectual by the death of its author, and stamps the testamentary theory with absurdity on the very face of it. Hence the substitution of *covenant* for *testament* in Hebrews 9. 15, 20, as revised, is a change in the right direction. Yet it renders the incongruity of *testament* in the intervening verses 16, 17 all the more obvious, and suggests the question whether it can be possible for διαθήκη in these two verses to have so incoherently exceptional a meaning. The difficulty is not solved or met by the marginal note in the Revised Version, 'The Greek word here used signifies both *covenant* and *testament*.' For the question at once arises, Can διαθήκη possibly signify *testament* in verses 16, 17 when it must signify *covenant* in verses 15 and 20, as well as in every other passage of the New Testament and the Septuagint?

Alford, in pleading for the testamentary theory, does indeed mention as analogous to the case in question the well-known fact that the naturalised English word *testament* as applied to the two parts of the Bible has the technical meaning of *book*; and he adds, 'We do not therefore sink the other and deeper meaning.' Yet it is scarcely conceivable that in a sound homogeneous argument the word *testament* could be used in *both* senses, similarly as διαθήκη is said to be in Hebrews 9. 15-20. The case is different from

that of רוח in Ecclesiastes 11. 4, 5, where, as is already observed in page 9, the fifth verse has no argumentative connection with the fourth. Just as ἄγγελος includes both *angel* and human *messenger*, so likewise, as is clearly brought out in the Septuagint and in the English Bible of 1611, רוח here includes both ἄνεμος and πνεῦμα: "He that observeth the **wind** shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what is the way of the **spirit**, . . . even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all." In the ninth of Hebrews, however, it is essential to the drift and coherence of the argument that there be coincidence and identity in the scope and signification of διαθήκη as used throughout the chapter.

The great principle stated in verses 16, 17 about the διαθήκη in its relation to the διαθέμενος is exemplified by the history of God's ancient covenant with Israel as set forth in verses 18-20; and the connection between that old covenant and the new covenant is described in verse 15. Hence the argument would be vitiated if διαθήκη in these verses were employed in the two different senses assigned to it. As in verses 15 and 20 διαθήκη unquestionably refers to the ancient ברית or covenant of Exodus 24, so in verses 16 and 17 διαθήκη must bear the meaning of ברית, in accordance with the import of ὅθεν, which is the connecting link between 16-17 and 18-20. Alford, in his commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, labours hard to reconcile the testamentary theory

with the reference to the old Mosaic covenant. He thus argues on verse 16,—

"It is quite in vain to attempt to deny the testamentary sense of διαθήκη in this verse. Many have made the attempt. . . . . διαθήκη, from διατιθέναι, '*disponere*,' διατίθεσθαι, '*disponere sibi*' regards, in ordinary Greek usage, that disposition of a man's property which he makes in prospect of his death, and signifies *a will or testament*. So in Plato and Demosthenes. . . . On the other hand, the word is by no means tied to this its more usual meaning. The general one, of a *disposition* of any kind, is sometimes found applied to other circumstances than those at the close of life. So Aristophanes, *Aves* 439, where it evidently means a *covenant*, an *agreement*. And in this sense . . . do we find the word most often used in the LXX and New Testament. The other sense, that of a *disposition* or *ordinance* made by God πρός τινα, or μετά τινος, is the most ordinary one in the LXX. To it may be referred almost all the passages where, in a loose sense of the word, we in English render *covenant*: e.g. Gen. vi. 18, ix. 9, xv. 18; and a hundred other places. . . . Now, having these three leading senses of the word before us, we are to enquire which of them our writer is likely to have intended when he wrote as a general axiom, ὅπου διαθήκη, θάνατον ἀνάγκη φέρεσθαι τοῦ διαθεμένου. . . . Only when we recur to sense (1), that of a *testament*, can it be true, that where a διαθήκη is, there must of necessity be death, and that, the death τοῦ διαθεμένου, of him who has made the testament. . . . . I believe then it will be found that we must at all hazards accept the meaning *testament* here, as being the only one which will in any way meet the plain requirements of the verse. . . . . It is much disputed how the logic of this passage can cohere: seeing that, how properly soever the latter διαθήκη may be spoken of and argued on as being a testament, the former one could have no such character, and consequently cannot be thus argued on. . . . The matter seems to stand thus. The word διαθήκη has the double sense of a covenant and a testament. Both these senses may be applied to both διαθῆκαι: to the latter more properly belongs the testamentary sense, but to the former also in as far as it was typical of and foreshadowed the other. . . . The testator was imperfectly, but still was formally represented by the animals slain in sacrifice: *there* was a death, *there* was a sprinkling of and

sealing by blood. . . . In both cases there is an inheritance, and in both it is the same. In both it is bequeathed : in the latter actually by One who has come in person and died : in the former, only typically, by the same One ceremonially present.'

Here however the word *bequeathed* in its testamentary sense is incompatible with the actual circumstances of the case. Jesus indeed, in Luke 22. 29, says to his disciples, *κἀγὼ διατίθεμαι ὑμῖν, καθὼς διέθετό μοι ὁ πατήρ μου, βασιλείαν.* Yet so far is the idea of death from entering into the conception of this appointment, that it is positively excluded both by the fact that Jesus attributes the act expressed by the verb *διατίθεναι* to God the Father as well as to himself, and by the other fact that he speaks of himself in such a way as to show that he is referring, not to the sufferings and death of his first advent, but to the deathless glory of his second advent. So far was the idea of a *bequest* taking effect at death from entering into the case, that the promised inheritance was a kingdom in which the receivers of it would sit with their divine Master at his table in his kingdom—a circumstance utterly incompatible with the idea of a bequest accruing through the death of the testator. Further, the Father gives the inheritance in the sense of *διατίθεναι*, as fully and really as the Son gives it, so that 'the death of the testator' in this connection also is simply impossible. Indeed, the bestowing of the inheritance is primarily and pre-eminently, though not exclusively, the act of the Father, 1 Peter 1. 3-4, Acts 20. 32; 26. 18, Ephesians 1. 3-12, Colossians 1. 12-13;

and it is through an essentially different connection that the death of the Son is brought in. It is thus brought in, not as the death of a testator, but as the death of a sacrificial victim, loving the church and giving himself for her—not that he may thereby *bequeath* an inheritance *to her*, but that, in 'the power of an endless life,' he may redeem her *to himself* (Ephesians 5. 25-27).

Indeed, the idea of the death of a testator as essential to the constituting or ratifying or giving validity to a διαθήκη, and thus making it βεβαία, is foreign to the Scriptural use of the word διαθήκη. The διαθήκαι spoken of in the Septuagint and in the New Testament in connection with death were *covenants* in the making or sealing of which sacrifices were offered ; and the deaths were, not deaths of testators, but the deaths of the sacrificial victims.

Although in classical usage διαθήκη sometimes denotes, as expressed in the Lexicon of Liddell and Scott, '*a disposition* of property by will, *a will and testament*,' this meaning is (as already shown in page 20) impossible and absurd in Hebrews 9. 15-20. Alford's statement that the testator was represented by the animals slain in sacrifice, so far from giving even plausibility to the testamentary theory, does but illustrate how strained and incongruous the theory is. Not even 'typically' was there a bequest in the sacrificial inauguration of the ancient διαθήκη. Nor yet was there a bequest in the sacrificial inauguration of the new διαθήκη, the Saviour's death being the

death not of a testator but of One who was both the priest and the sacrificial victim, giving his soul to God as His people's ransom, and thus, not bequeathing an inheritance *to them*, but redeeming them *to himself* and to the Father.

The testamentary theory, as explaining Hebrews 9. 16-17, is alien to the usage of the Septuagint and the New Testament. Where a testament, or something akin to a testament in the testamentary sense of the word, is referred to, it is not called either διαθήκη or ברית. Thus, for instance, the word ברית or διαθήκη is not used to designate Isaac's blessing of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 27 and 28, or Jacob's blessing of Joseph and his sons in 48, or his own sons in 49, or Joseph's charge to his brethren and the relative oath which he exacted from them in 50. 24-25, or David's dying charge to Solomon in 1 Kings 2. And although Joshua, on the eve of his death, made a ברית with the people, 24. 25, it had not the nature of a testament, and the validity of it was in no way dependent on his death. Conversely, where death *is* associated with a διαθήκη or ברית, the death is invariably the death of a sacrificial victim or victims, and in no case the death of a testator. Further, the death spoken of in Hebrews 9. 16-17 is not any kind of death, but specifically and exclusively death by the shedding of blood: 'Where a διαθήκη is, there must of necessity be brought in the death of the διαθέμενος. . . . Wherefore even the first [διαθήκη] was not inaugurated without blood.' Now the unten-

ableness of the rendering in the revised version of this passage is surely apparent at a glance: 'there must of necessity be the death of him that made it.' *Who* made the first διαθήκη? Only one answer is possible: Jehovah made it, and *He* made it in circumstances which preclude the very idea of 'the death of him that made it.' The absurdity cannot be got rid of by pointing to the death of the beasts slain in the relative sacrifice. They were in no sense of the word makers of the covenant; nor yet did they typically represent 'him that made it.' They represented, not the maker or author, but the μεσίτης or mediator and sacrificial victim of the new covenant.

Dr. Kay, in *the Speaker's Commentary* on the Epistle to the Hebrews, thus shows briefly and cogently the ineptitude of the testamentary theory,

> 'It is evident from x. 15-17 that the passage which has been quoted from Jeremiah dominates the whole discussion in chapters viii—x. The use of the term "Mediator" of itself shews that we have here to do with the Hebrew idea of a "covenant," not with the Roman idea of a "testament." A mediator is the proper guardian of a covenant (Galatians iii. 15-20), but has no place in regard to a testament. Neither again does the death of a testator possess any of the sacrificial character which is referred to in verses 15-22. . . . To speak of "*transgressions* under a *testament*" (verse 15) is to join together incongruous ideas: whereas Israel is often said to have "transgressed" God's "covenant." Deuteronomy xvii. 2, Jeremiah xxxiv. 18, Hosea vi. 7, viii. 1.'

The use of διαθήκη throughout the New Testament as equivalent to ברית of the Old Testament is amply sufficient to explain the scope and signification of διαθήκη and its cognate

ὁ διαθέμενος in Hebrews 9. 16-17, and the precise import of the writer's argument. Besides personal, social, and secular covenants between man and man, such, for instance, as the covenant between Joshua (9. 6-15) and the Gibeonites, and the covenant between King Solomon and Hiram, King of Tyre (1 Kings 5. 12 (Hebrew Bible 26), Amos 1. 9), there might be even religious or divinely enjoined covenants, such as Circumcision (Genesis 17, Acts 7. 8), without the shedding of sacrificial blood, or the offering of a sacrificial victim. Often however—and pre-eminently in such covenants between God and His people as that of Exodus 24, referred to in Hebrews 9. 18-20—the making of the covenant was intimately associated with sacrifice. The very first passage where ברית, and in the Septuagint διαθήκη, occurs is the narrative of God's covenant with Noah, as described in Genesis 8-9. It was when Noah built an altar, and sacrificed burnt-offerings on it, and Jehovah smelled a savour of rest that He said, 'Behold, I establish my covenant with you.' Still more explicit in its sacrificial details is Genesis 15, where the Lord makes a covenant with Abram, and, in so doing, causes a lamp of fire, apparently the Shekinah, representing the divine presence, to pass between the pieces into which the sacrificial victims had been divided. This has a remarkable counterpart in Jeremiah 34. 18, where the Lord refers to transgressors against his covenant, who had not performed the words of the covenant which they made before him 'when they cut the

calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.

Now it may be specially observed in connection with such prominent passages as these, in which ברית *covenant* is closely associated with *sacrifice*, that the only covenants mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews are the new and better covenant, of which Jesus is the mediator, and the old Mosaic covenant, which was the type and pioneer of the new. One of the essentials of each of these covenants was the shedding of sacrificial blood, and the offering of the relative sacrifice. What gave importance and value to the shedding of the blood and the offering of the sacrifices in the inauguration of the old covenant was the divine greatness of the covenant, and the still greater greatness of the new covenant of which the old covenant was the pioneer and emblem, and by which it should afterwards be superseded. The death of the sacrificial victims in the 24th of Exodus was thus notable because it symbolised or typified the death of Him who should be both priest and victim, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, and thus putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself. His death was essential to his work as Redeemer, Mediator, Saviour; and it was with primary reference to his one great sacrifice, and to the shedding of *His Blood* of the new covenant as the price of His people's redemption, that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews declared, "where a διαθήκη is, there must of necessity be brought in the death of the διαθέ-

μενος: for a διαθήκη is of force ἐπὶ νεκροῖς (over dead ones), whereas it availeth nothing while the διαθέμενος liveth.' This is not asserted, in a 'general axiomatic sense,' of all διαθήκαι in the testamentary meaning of the word, or in any meaning of it. The words ὅπου γὰρ διαθήκη no more refer to every διαθήκη than do the words ὅπου τὸ σῶμα in Luke 17. 37 refer to every σῶμα. The reference is to those διαθῆκαι of which the writer is speaking. They are *two* in number, and are described in the fourth of Galatians, where in verse 24 the Apostle Paul mentions δύο διαθῆκαι, *two covenants.* These are the new covenant, and the old covenant by which the new was prefigured. The well-known expression *blood of the covenant*, which is used with reference to both covenants, refutes the assertion that the statement in Hebrews 9. 16-17 is inapplicable to a covenant, for it clearly implies that the *covenant* was constituted by means of *death.* And what is thus implied by this deeply significant phrase in Exodus 24. 8, Zechariah 9. 11, Matthew 26. 28, Mark 14. 24, Hebrews 9. 20; 10, 29; 13. 20, is expressly declared in Hebrews 9. 16-17. Then follows, in verses 18-20, the ancient exemplification of this great doctrine, in the inauguration of the old covenant. And the writer immediately adds in further elucidation of his theme, 'And both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry he sprinkled likewise with the blood. And almost all things are purified with blood according to the Law; and without shedding of blood there comes no re-

mission.' Surely it is evident from an attentive survey of the whole passage that it contains no reference to a testator or to the making of a testament, and that διαθήκη, wherever it occurs in the chapter, must mean simply *covenant.*

Further, seeing that the only dead ones in the inaugurating of the old or first covenant were the beasts in sacrifice, it follows that they constituted the διαθέμενος of that covenant, similarly as Jesus was the διαθέμενος of the new covenant—the participle διαθέμενος being used, not with the active signification of *testator*, but with a reflexive or passive import. Accordingly, with the aid of the supplementary word *victim*, the term ὁ διαθέμενος, found nowhere else in the New Testament, nor apparently in the Septuagint, may be explained as denoting the *covenant victim.* And the specific import of ἐπί, in the phrase ἐπὶ νεκροῖς, may be illustrated by the prepositions עַל and ἐπί in the Hebrew original and the Septuagint version of such passages as Leviticus 16. 21, Deuteronomy 21. 6, Psalm 50. 5. The two words ἐπὶ νεκροῖς literally signify *upon* or *over dead ones*—obviously not dead *testators*, but dead *sacrificial victims*, through the shedding of whose blood the διαθήκη became βεβαία. That this is the import of ἐπὶ νεκροῖς may be proved from the Septuagint version of Psalm 50. 5, where, however, there is somehow a change from the *first* person of the Hebrew original, to the *third*: 'Gather together to him his saints, those who have entered into **covenant** with him **over sacrifices**':

τοὺς διατιθεμένους· τὴν διαθήκην αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ θυσίαις. Hebrews 9. 17.—διαθήκη γὰρ ἐπὶ νεκροῖς βεβαία.

Here the phrase ἐπὶ θυσίαις corresponds to the ἐπὶ νεκροῖς of Hebrews 9. 17, ἐπὶ θυσίαις designating the sacrificial victims by means of which God's ὅσιοι entered into covenant with Him, and ἐπὶ νεκροῖς designating the sacrificial victims by means of which such a covenant becomes βεβαία.

Accordingly Hebrews 9. 16-17 may be paraphrased somewhat thus, with the view of expounding its precise import, and showing that διαθέμενος and διαθήκη contain no reference whatever to a testator or to his testament, but refer simply to the two covenants and the sacrificial victims over which (ἐπὶ νεκροῖς) they were inaugurated.

Paraphrase

So intimately is the shedding of sacrificial blood associated with the two covenants spoken of throughout this Epistle, that it may be said—whether of the Old Covenant, inaugurated with the blood of calves and goats, or of the New Covenant, inaugurated with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot—that the covenant is founded on the death of ὁ διαθέμενος, the victim sacrificed in the making of it. Hence, as in ancient times—whether in the case of God's covenant with Noah, or with Abram, or with Moses and the children of Israel—the covenant came into force over the dead bodies of the beasts whose blood was shed (13. 11) and sprinkled, so now the New Covenant

hath come into force through the death of Him who bore our sins in His own body on the tree. Through His death the covenant was thus constituted and established as it could not have been while He, the covenant victim (ὁ διαθέμενος), was alive, and ere He The Living One became dead (ἐγενόμην νεκρὸς, Revelation 1. 18). Accordingly He made peace though the blood of His Cross, and became the Mediator and Surety of the new and better covenant. He hath thus reconciled us to God in the body of His flesh through His death, so as to present us holy and without blemish and unreproveable in His sight. In this way we have been brought into the bond of the covenant, and exalted to the freedom of the glory of the children of God. Accordingly in our happy communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, God has given a glorious fulfilment to His ancient proclamation, 'Gather unto me my saints —them who have made a covenant with me over sacrifice.'

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